

L'UMILE PIANTA.

OFFICIALS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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MISS L. GRAY, 5, Old Palace Lane, Richmond, S.W.

Hon. Editor—

MISS H. E. WIX, at The Hurst, Headley, Epsom.

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MISS G. M. BERNAU, 53, Kidbrook Park Road, Blackheath, S.E.

Years 1896-7 and Present Students—

MISS L. GRAY, 5, Old Palace Lane, Richmond, S.W.

Years 1898 and 1901—

MRS. PICTON HUGHES-JONES, Pond Hill Cottage, Cheam, Surrey.

Years 1899 and 1900—

MISS L. FAUNCE, 13, Chilworth Street, London, W.

Years 1902-4.

MISS H. E. WIX, at The Hurst, Headley, Epsom.

Years 1905-6—

MISS M. E. DAVIS, The Poplars, Enfield.

Years 1907-9—

MISS M. E. FRANKLIN, 31, Seymour House, Compton Street, Tavistock Place, W.C.

Year 1910—

MISS J. R. SMITH, at 40, Cornwall Gardens, S. Kensington, W.

Years 1911-12—

MISS D. CHAPLIN, 2, Holland Villas Road, Kensington, W.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

1909. Aitken, J. Y., at Bingfield East Quarter, Corbridge, Northumberland (for summer terms).
 1906. Davis, M. E., at 134, Sloane Street, S.W. (wrongly reported as having left at Easter).
 1908. Hart, R., c/o W. Dettlebach, Esq., Heverswood, Brasted, Kent.
 1906. Monro, C. C., U.M.C.A., Korogwe, Tanga, German East Africa (for about two years).
 1896. Mulloney, E. L., Oaklands, Clonmel
 1899. Nesbitt, D., General Delivery, Victoria, B. Columbia.
 1912. Nevins, D., "Gullivers," Eton College, Windsor (rooms).
 1912. Petty, M., at Broomlands, Dumfries, N.B.
 1909. Ruston, E. M., at East Oakley House, Basingstoke.
 1911. Smith, J. R., Hockerton Rectory, Southwell, Notts (home).

NOTICES.

Miss Loveday, who has managed the P.U. School Painting Portfolio for four years, would be very glad to hear from anyone who would either take over this work or give her substantial help with it. She finds that it demands more time than she is able to give it, especially lately since its membership has increased so largely. Will anyone wishing to help please write to Miss Loveday at Fredville, near Dover?

A most interesting article has been held over owing to lack of space.

There was no Students' meeting on May 3rd, as only one student made her way to Chilworth Street—others evidently felt that as the Conference was so near they would see their friends at Caxton Hall.

There were eight students present on June 7th, and everybody enjoyed a sociable time round the tea-table. Those

present were Misses Davis, Gray, Macfarlane, MacSheehy, J. R. Smith, Eleanor Smith, Thorp, and Young. We hope that there will be as many there on July 5th. There were some amusing experiences given about fresh-water aquariums and their inhabitants. General approval was expressed of the May number of the *Plant*, and it was felt to be one of the best—if not the best—we have ever had, and we hoped the Editor would feel encouraged still to go forward and that her work on our behalf was appreciated.

Of course, we talked about Miss Mason's delightful plan about "Fairfield," and all wished that we could manage to go there this summer—but all equally determined to take advantage of the very first opportunity that came along. We are all more than grateful to Miss Mason for making such a thing possible.

There will be no Students' meetings during August and September, the next being on October 4th, at 3.30, at 13, Chilworth Street.

There will be no September number of *L'Umile Pianta*, so the next number will appear on November 15th. All communications must reach the Editor by *October 25th*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

50, Porchester Terrace, W.

May 14th, 1913.

DEAR EDITOR,—May I make use of your columns to thank all the students who helped us during the Conference, not only by acting as stewards, but by their presence? Their bright, keen interest in all the proceedings was a great help to the speakers, and formed the nucleus of an earnest-minded audience.

I feel sure that they, like the Committee, felt proud of the addresses given by ex-students of the House of Education, and I hope that all will realise that they are potential speakers for the Union, and that having had unequalled opportunities

to study Miss Mason's philosophy, they can help the cause we all have so much at heart by spreading it whenever opportunity occurs. It becomes more and more difficult to get speakers who really understand Miss Mason's thought, and as our Union grows we feel strongly the necessity for clear-thinking and humble-minded interpreters of her teaching.—I am, Yours sincerely,

H. FRANKLIN.

Scale How.

DEAR EX-STUDENTS,

Since last we wrote to the *Pianta* almost a whole term has passed, and that term a "summer" one. At first we feared that it would be a "term" only, but now, looking back on the "long halves," the evening walks, the hours spent along the Terrace, we realise that after all it has been "summer."

The first event of the term was Whitsuntide, when we had Mrs. Franklin and Michael with us. They came on Friday, May 9th, on which we had a drawing-room evening, "Schumann." On Saturday, after a gorgeous "Long Half," the Juniors gave us their play, a repetition of "The Scenes from the Mill on the Floss." This again we enjoyed very much. It was supplemented by a miscellaneous programme of songs, pianoforte solos, recitations, and dancing, all of which were delightful. On Monday morning we heard, from Mrs. Franklin, an account of the Conference, and also had the great pleasure of hearing her paper on "Education," which later she gave at a meeting of the International Union of Women Workers, at Havre. On Monday evening we had a drawing-room evening, "Mozart," and on Tuesday our visitors left us.

The second event was Empire Day. St. George's was gaily decorated with flags, and at 12.15 the whole House assembled there for an Empire Day service. Empire hymns were sung, patriotic poems read, Miss Mason addressed us,

and we closed with the P.N.E.U. Empire hymn and the National Anthem.

The third event was Half Term. Again there was anxiety for the weather, but again all fears were dispelled. We had a gloriously fine "Long Half" on the Saturday, and returned too weary even to dance. Monday dawned a perfect day—a blue sky, a bright sun, a gentle cool breeze. By 8.30 Scale How was deserted. Such conditions called up energy—and so energetic was one party that its members, whose destination was Helvellyn, rejected that mountain at its foot as being too low for Helvellyn! They thereupon tramped some miles up Grisedale in search of the lost height. After some time they were enlightened by a farmer as to its whereabouts; they turned about, managed to climb some little way up its sides before it was time to return. By 8 o'clock in the evening all were indoors tired but very happy, and no one minded one scrap when at 9 it began to pour with rain.

After such gorgeous weather we had high hopes for the fourth event of the term, our walks with Mr. Thornley. He came on Monday, June 9th, on which day 1.2 inches of rain fell. On Tuesday, the Seniors' day, the weather was better, for although it was dull and threatening, we had practically no rain. In the morning we journeyed up Loughrigg, discovering thousands of wonders on our way; at the Tarn we found the dragon-flies pitifully emerging from their cases into the dull, cold world. In the afternoon we went up to the Nook and caught insects energetically. In the evening we had a paper on "Byron" in the drawing-room. Wednesday was the Juniors' day; the morning was bright, and they had a good time down the Brathay; in the afternoon, in spite of rain, the children went for their walk with Mr. Thornley. After tea, under an umbrella, he inspected the gardens, and later we had a general musical evening in the drawing-room. On Thursday he left us all with very happy memories of our time with him and piles of "beasties" to paint.

The fifth event was the Junior picnic. In the invitation it was termed a "Surprise Picnic," and speculation ran high as to its possibilities. In the morning of the day we were told that the place chosen was the field adjoining the Terrace, and also we were requested to bring gym. shoes. Then everyone was "almost" sure that it was "sports," and everyone was "quite" sure when, after lunch, we were advised to secure hair as firmly as possible and to wear hockey skirts. And it was "sports." Seniors began with a four team relay race, followed by an equilibrium contest (walking on upturned flower-pots); panting and hot after running down the field, we were taxed to thread twelve needles with minute eyes, with very thick cotton; then to race down the field; supply the last line to a Limerick, and race back again. Tea on the Terrace next followed—then more racing, final heats, and a gymnastic display of Swedish emotion drill, commanded by Madame Hysteria. This display was most amusing—exercises as 'eye-winking' on the spot, beginning with the right eye, quite regardless of time (this to express cunning), were ably carried out. About six o'clock Miss Yates presented prizes (parcels of Grasmere gingerbread) to winners, and out of breath but very happy we returned to Scale How.

The sixth event concerned especially the Seniors. This was their visit to Dr. Hough, on June 14th, to have tea with him, and to inspect his rock garden. It was a bright warm afternoon and the garden looked at its best. It extends over part of Loughrigg, and is laid out with the most beautiful Alpine growths. Every cranny seemed to have an occupant more lovely than the last. We were very grateful to Dr. Hough for so delightful an afternoon.

We are anticipating the seventh and eighth events. First the arrival of Dr. Helen Webb, who comes on Friday, June 20th, and the following week the visit of Mme. Ilona de Gyory Ginever, who is giving her lecture on Hungary to the College and Ambleside friends on Saturday, June 28th.

The drawing-room evenings this term have been "Schumann," by Miss Adcock; "Longfellow," by Miss Gibbs; and "Byron," by Miss Lowe. Shakespeare evenings have been arranged as follows: "Coriolanus," by Miss Spelman; "King Lear," by Miss Owen; and "A Comedy of Errors," by Miss Openshaw. We have had also a general musical evening arranged by Miss Gladding, and one on Mozart.

We have held the Poetry Club on alternate wet halves this term. This has happened only once, when a paper and various extracts on Spenser were read.

The College flower list now numbers 274, and the bird list 65.—Yours sincerely,

THE PRESENT STUDENTS.

STUDENTS' DAY AT THE CONFERENCE.

Miss Gardner, of Buckhurst College, spoke first at our afternoon meeting, and compared the usual High School Methods and Curriculum with those of the P.U. School. The picture she drew was even more bare and melancholy than that generally given even by firm believers in the P.N.E.U. The root of the evil seemed in her opinion to be the public examinations and the competition between the various schools and classes to gain the largest number of "passes" or "honours." For this reason one girl might be kept working at the Tudor Period for the whole of her school career! One way in which High School girls compare favourably with those of the P.U. School is in translating from English into foreign languages. Perhaps this is because they do much more of it as homework.

The only unfavourable criticisms made by Mr. Gibbs and various other schoolmasters whom he had asked for their opinions were that P.U. schoolboys so often write and spell badly and have so little idea of "tense"—past, present, or future.

There was quite a long discussion after these papers. Miss

Pennethorne spoke first in a great hurry, as she had to catch a train. In her experience, High School girls have a marvellous proficiency, but not knowledge. Mrs. Hall deplored the limited and dull curriculum of some boys' preparatory schools but at the same time agreed that it was due to the entrance examinations of the public schools. The Admiralty are now leading the way by reformatory in the entrance examination for Osborne.

There was a little general discussion after Miss Smeeton's paper, and we were glad to have Miss Mabel Conder with us, as of course her work brings her into close touch with the children of the working classes. She said they found it so very difficult not to lose sight of girls and boys after they have left school, and suggested that some of us might like to enter into correspondence with either one or the other, and by occasional letters show interest in what they are doing. She also spoke of the splendid work done by the C.C.H.F., and encouraged students to help more in the Saturday afternoon expeditions. Mrs. Douglas Wilson always warmly welcomed the offer of help in this direction. (This suggestion has already borne fruit in more than one case.) We all felt very sorry that Miss Smeeton was not present herself, for we knew that she would have been able to speak to us about many things.

There was no definite programme for the evening meeting, and it resolved itself more or less into an informal talk. There were no points raised in connection with the P.N.E.U. Conference. And of course there was nothing settled as regards our own Conference next Easter. The general feeling of those present was in favour of a long week end Conference, as in 1911, and that the general arrangements should be left for the Committee to settle in conjunction with the authorities at Scale How.

Suggestions of an evening's entertainment arranged by Old Students, and also of an all-day expedition for all Students, both past and present, met with general approval.

The subject of getting in subscriptions was discussed, and various suggestions were forthcoming, the most feasible being that at the beginning of the year the head of each budget should enclose a list of all its members, and that as it reached each student she should state beside her name whether or no she had sent her subscription to the Treasurer. It was thought that an appeal made in this way would be more likely to strike home than those made in the *Plant* appear to do. After that the party split into groups, and some discussed Miss Krüger's method of French pronunciation and others discussed scouting. Miss Lees told us about her scouting out on the South African velt, where she and her pupils seem to have had most thrilling times.

PAPER BY MISS SMEETON, READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.

A few weeks ago a village boy came to me and said, "Please, Miss, will you go for a walk with me some Saturday? I know such a lot of things you would like to know," and these last holidays I have had letters from working boys all in the same strain, wanting to share their treasures.

This is the straightforward attitude I think the students should have towards those who have not had our opportunities—I am trying to keep especially to intellectual opportunities. "The intellectual life, like every manner of spiritual life, has but one food whereby it lives and grows—the sustenance of living ideas." We know definitely as students the value of these ideas, where to find them, and how to bring children into touch with them. Any of us who really know the children of the working classes know that they are not only ready for the best, but absolutely hungry for it. "Imagination must have nourishment outside itself, otherwise it will live upon its own product," and one of the results is hooliganism. I am firmly convinced that intellectual

hunger is at the bottom of a great deal of so-called hooliganism.

"First catch your hare!" Our hare in this case is longing to be caught—it is yawning its head off or being a nuisance in our Sunday-schools; it is looking very fierce and wondering why "Woodbines" are not more comforting, while it lounges round the corners of the village, or, worse still, a golf house; it is pushing a pram and reading a penny novelette at the same time; up a country lane it comes prancing out of the village school, and after a wild shout and a caper or two will actually run into your net and ask for "the rest of the story about Shylock," "a lot more about Napoleon."

In the country we are needed badly in the Sunday-schools. I suppose many of us are teaching in them and know what delightfully responsive children we meet there. I met a boy of 14 I knew coming away from his higher elementary school looking very much depressed. I asked for the reason, and he said, "We've just had our Scripture exam. I got a question out of the New Testament, and I went and answered it out of Moses' end of the Bible; I'm sick of the Bible; we go on having lessons out of it until we are fair mixed." Ellen Key says in "The Century of the Child": "Nothing shows better how deeply religion is rooted in man's nature than the fact that 'religious education' is not able to destroy religion." We know of a religious education very different from this. Children delight in Bible lessons from Paterson Smyth's books. "Ourselves" is a capital book to read with a class of boys or girls, especially if we are on friendly terms with them, for it gives rise to many questions and frequent discussion.

We hear a great deal of talk about the inadequacy of our elementary school system, but as far as my experience goes they succeed splendidly just where the schools of the leisured classes fail dismally. The working class children leave school just as keen as they can be, reaching out in all directions.

The girls I know are chiefly those who are going into domestic service, but they nearly all of them say, "Yes, I know it's a fairly comfortable life, but it's so dull." I lent some girls Mrs. Goslett's "Domestic Hygiene," and some of them have become keenly interested about the house and will surely do their work better for knowing and understanding the reason that underlies an apparently dull routine. Schofield's Physiology and also his Manual of Hygiene are books they really delight in; they are full of genuine wonder and pleasure that the everyday world is so full and interesting. I find, and I should like to know if others have the same experience, that girls have a more practical turn than boys; the things that bear on everyday life interests them. Boys I find have more sentiment and imagination; poetry and adventures, and history, "if there is plenty of it," is what they crave. One boy was always asking for "more about Napoleon." I lent him all the histories I could find, and he picked out what he wanted; at long last he was satisfied, and said, "I've found Napoleon out; he could only fight if he settled on the ground." Scoutmasters are nearly always glad to have help with their troops, especially with the indoor work. This term I am going to teach a troop basket work, and we end up our handicraft class by a reading. Arnold Foster's "Citizen Reader" and Hakluyt's "English Voyages" are examples of the books they like. "The passion of patriotism, the bond of citizenship, are dominant in our age." "It is something to prepare for the uses of the State a just, liberal, and enlightened patriotism in the breast of a single citizen." We can help forward an "informed patriotism" by lending the parents and children of the working classes real books to read so that they may have a foundation for their opinions. I find boys of 13 and upwards very confident in expressing their views on Socialism, strikes, and other questions of industrial unrest, and these opinions are based very often merely on "what I heard father and another man saying." It is my

experience that "father and another man" are quite ready to read, but they want their reading in a different order from the boy. Take, for instance, the subject of Socialism. I have found that a man who will not show the least desire to read about the beginning of "industrial unrest" will eagerly devour any modern book on the subject such as "Christ and Labour" (addresses by eleven Labour Members of Parliament), and will then gradually work backward—the boy will begin at the beginning, and is it any wonder when the beginning happens to be "Piers the Ploughman"?

These are only the merest suggestions, the result of my own very limited experience. The point I want to make is this: it is no use waiting for something to turn up so that we can spread our principles; opportunities are with us always, the maids and men in the house, the gardeners, the game-keepers, the cottage mothers are all waiting for something to read, and many of them know what they want, and it is but a small thing for us to lend our books and to find out where they will be acceptable. I would specially urge that we use our influence in getting the right books read at Mothers' Meetings: the majority of them are keen, intelligent women, and they long for "something that will give us something to think about." I have heard and read such twaddle at Mothers' Meetings that I am moved to speak strongly. Father Stanton read such books as "Adam Bede" and "Nicholas Nickleby" to his mothers, and I know of another Mothers' Meeting where at least one book on social subjects such as Olive Malvery's "Baby Toilers," is read during a session, and how grateful they are to have their outlook widened. "Tired? yes, Miss, it's been a big wash, but I somehow get through it easier now I have so much to think about. George reads 'The Mother' to me in the evenings, and I picture it all over again to myself and it does help on."

PAGES FROM THE DIARY OF A PAID AGITATOR.

(Concluded.)

This is a consumption case—a "*revisit*." The husband has been ill for two years. Various charitable ladies have visited the family and left leaflets explaining the importance of fresh air, a dry and healthy dwelling, etc. They would have thought it "*pauperising*" to give any help freely except such advice, and when the man lost permanent work they moved into the basement to save rent. The Guardians cannot and the charitable agencies will not give relief towards rent. At last he was persuaded to enter the infirmary, and now the woman has been notified to the medical officer as phthisical. I suppose I must leave another leaflet, and at least I will see that the basement is not damp.

We find the family removed: new tenants are installed in the basement. The children are playing in the area yard while the parents "straighten up the place." In the dark corner of this yard lies a mattress, and by it some leather cutting tools, rusting in the mud, and in strange juxtaposition a photo frame. I recognise that this once contained a portrait of Mrs. L.'s little girl who died of measles.

I feel anxious and perturbed. I ask the newcomers what they know of the former tenants' fate. A kindly-looking woman wipes her hands on her apron, interrupting her washing to tell me the little story—how Mr. L. was in the infirmary, and Mrs. L. seemed to fret and get no better, and of how she lost her work. (A lady who used to be kind to her and to employ her went abroad on a long holiday.) How Mrs. L. got behind with her rent, and how the brokers came and took away the "sticks," excepting, of course, Mr. L.'s leather-cutting tools and the bed, which were thrown into the yard, and she told me how Mrs. L. went up to the